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The Famous and Memorable

HISTORY

OF

CHEVY-CHACE,

BY THE

River *Tweed*, in *Scotland*.

Together with
the fatal Battle between Lord Percy of Northumberland, and his fifteen hundred Archers, and the Earl of Douglas, with twenty hundred Scots; in which both these Earls, and most of their Men were slain.

THE HISTORY OF THE Hunting on Chevy Chace.

CHAP. I.

How the Piercies came by their Name, and to be Earls of Northumberland, and of the Vow which the Earl in the Reign of Henry II. made, of hunting three Days in Chevy Chace.

THE noble families of the Piercies, Earls of Northumberland, have always had a high esteem amongst all the English nobility; and, for their valour famed throughout the world. We might give a large account of the descent of that noble Earl, who is to be a chief part of the subject of the following history. History records him for the fortunate valour of a courteous Knight, who killed the King of Scots, by running his spear into his eye, as he was besieging Rux-

burgh caſtle. Upon which his name was changed, and that of Piercy given, together with the Earldom of Northumberland, and this of whom I now ſpeak was his grandſon and heir. But to come nearer to the purpoſe; the noble Earl of Northumberland taking his progreſs, attended with fifteen hundred archers, paſſed on to the marſhes of Scotland, and wiſhing for ſome venifon, he was informed, that in a large foreſt beyond the Tweed, call'd Cheevy-Chace, belonging to the Earl Douglas, a Scotch nobleman, there was ſuch a ſort of it, that the like was in no other part of the kingdom; and proviſions being ſcarce on the Engliſh ſide, made his men ſo forward that they deſired to go out in parties, and bring away as much as they could undiſcover-

ed; but he despising a way that looked like deer stealing, told them, if their courage was but sufficient to venture for it fairly, himself would go with them; and so hunting it down at fair game, it would be brought off with honour, as a lawful prize taken in an enemy's country.

To this motion of the Earl's they soon gave consent. And so the Earl made a vow, that for three days he would take his pleasure in hunting on Chevy Chace. And so sending for dogs and toils, early on a Midsummer morning they passed the Tweed, and were by a guide directed to the place. So to the game they went. The dogs were put in to rouse the harts, the horns sounded, and the huntsmen's shouts, with the dogs cries, made a pleasant noise. But the villages all thinking it had been the sound of war on some sudden invasion, were so terrified, that some hid themselves, while others of them fled from their habitations, and alarmed the country.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of their killing many deer, and receiving at Supper-Time a threatening Meſſage from Douglas, commanding them to depart.

THE harts and roes, though ſwift as the wind, could not out-ſtrip the Engliſh arrows, our archers laying hundreds of them dead, ſo that they had got vaſt ſtore of veniſon, which made them doubt how to carry it off. Yet having refreſhed themſelves, they found the ſtore leſſened.

But while the Earl was at ſupper, on a table made upon the graſs, and ſitting on turfs, as he was about to give orders to his huntſmen to purſue the ſame ſport the next morning, in came a meſſenger in a ſcarlet livery. On which the Earl demanded from what place he came, and what was his buſineſs? to which he thus moſt haughtily replied,

Sir, whatever you are, my maſter, the noble Earl Douglas, chief ranger to the King of Scotland, to whom all theſe parks and chaces belong, hearing you have preſumed to enter them, and de-

ſtroy his deer, by me tells you, that if you do not ſuddenly depart, your lives ſhall pay for the injuries you have done, before to-morrow noon.

This being ſaid, he was about to depart; but Earl Piercy taking him by the ſleeve, ſaid, it is but convenient that you ſhould carry back an anſwer to your great Lord. Tell him my name is Piercy, a name at which all Scotland has trembled. Tell him, I have propoſed to take my pleaſure in the foreſts two days longer, and if he is valiant let him interrupt my ſport at the hazard of his life.

Upon that the meſſenger departed to the Scotch Earll, and related what was given him in charge by Earl Piercy.—At which the Scotchman ſtormed and fretted, walking up and down in a great fury.

He enquired the number of the Engliſh, but the meſſenger could not give him a certain account, only gueſſed there might be about ten or twelve hundred men. Whereupon he ordered his men and armour, which was gilded with gold, to be got ready againſt morning light,

alſo all his friends and ſervants, together with as many as made up full two thouſand men.

CHAP. III.

Of Earl Piercy's ſecond Day's Sport, and his Conduct on hearing of Earl Douglas's Approach.

THE Earl of Northumberland relying on his men's courage, who were the beſt archers in England, was ſo far from being daunted, that he ordered the table to be ſpread again, and ſtore of wines in healths went round to their proſperity.

The ſun no ſooner gilded the horizon, but the ſport was renewed, and the woods reſounded with the pleaſing noiſe. That morning they killed the moſt ſtately hart ever ſeen. Then the Earl turning to one of his knights, ſaid, The time draws near, that if Douglas keeps his word we ſhall have another kind of ſport. Therefore let it be our care to keep our men together; for man to man I fear them not againſt any nation under heaven; but if I thought he would not

come, we would remove to the next foreſt, for thither I perceive the deer are fled.

He had no ſooner uttered theſe words but Witherington came up to him, ſaying, My Lord, cauſe the dogs to be called off, and muſter up your forces, for on the top of yonder hill I ſee Douglas coming towards you, with upwards of two thouſand ſpearman. I thank thee, replied the Earl, and doubt not my courage. So Witherington bowing, ſaid, My Lord, I do not doubt ſo to behave myſelf, and your men this day, as to be remembered in the moſt diſtant ages.

Immediately the horns blew a retreat, the dogs were called off, and the archers muſtered about their leader, who raiſed up their courage with the following oration:

My renowned countrymen, it was by your conſent we paſſed over the Tweed, for recreation, which is ſoon likely to be diſturbed. Earl Douglas has ſent me a challenge, and is going to give us battle, or make us fly over the river Tweed. Pluck up your ſpirits, and conſider that you are Engliſhmen, and that Piercy

fights at the head of you; be courageous, and for the honour of our king, and the renown of our country, gain a lasting fame, which shall not die but with time itself.

Having said thus much, they all shouted, and immediately fell into order, some framing their arrows, and others new stringing their bows made of trusty steel.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Meeting of the two Earls; their Propoſal to deſide the Quarrel in ſingle Combat: with Witherington's Objection.

THE Engliſh archers, in number fifteen hundred, were no ſooner in readineſs, but Earl Douglas appeared on the top of the hill, mounted on a milk-white ſteed, and his men ranged in order behind him, with their glittering ſpears, whoſe number was juſt two thouſand.

Earl Piercy, taking a kaff in his hand, and ſword by his ſide, cauſed his men to move forward. Earl Douglas, being within about forty paces, demanded, whoſe men they were, that durſt preſume to hunt in his foreſt, and to kill his deer? Whoever they were they muſt expect to be ſeverely puniſhed, commanding them to yield immediately, if they expected mercy.

The Engliſh Earl replied, it matters not whoſe men they are; but what we

have done we juſtfy, and what deer we have killed we will carry away, or die upon the ſpot.

This, ſpoken with ſo much courage, made Douglas ſomewhat calmer. O, ſaid he, I know thee Earl Piercy, thou art an Earl as well as I; therefore, if thou art as brave as fame reports thee, let thou and I decide it.

This offer pleaſed Piercy, who drawing his ſword bid defiance to the challenger, and both were immediatly ready to engage, had not Withering on thus addreſſed himſelf to Earl Piercy: My Lord, heaven forbid that I and the reſt of your ſervants ſhould ſtand idle, while you are engaged; permit, therefore, my good Lord, that we all partake of the glory of the day.

Hereupon all the Engliſh ſhouted, and the engagement became general.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Battle begun, and of its obſtinate and bloody Countenance; and the Death of the two Earls.

THE Engliſh archers on the left diviſion immediately ſent a flight of arrows, which laid ſixty of the Scotch dead, and the right diviſion letting fly on the flank of their battallion, gauled them moſt miſerably. Earl Douglas ſeeing his men much diſcouraged, ordered them to advance, and come to a cloſe fight, whereby he imagined to make the Engliſh bows uſeleſs. But he was miſtaken, for whenever the front opened, the archers plied the Scots with their arrows, while the others kept them in play with their ſwords, inſomuch that the ground was covered with their dead bodies.

And now Earl Piercy being backed by divers Knights, like a tempeſt he broke in amongſt them, with ſuch fury, that he laid heaps of dead before him, inſo-

much that Earl Douglas, who was ggh-ing on the other ſide, and ſignalized his valour very much, was forced to come and ſuccour his broken forces, when the two Earls met like enraged l ons ; no armour was proof againſt their clear well-tempered ſwords. So that Earl Piercy beginning to faint, thus beſpoke the Earl Douglas :

Noble Lord, you ſee your blood begins to flow faſt, and death you cannot eſcape if you contend with me any longer, I therefore in pity to your life, would have you yield yourſelf my priſoner ; you ſhall be nobly uſed, and I'll prefer you to my King.

To this Earl Pierby replied, As for my life, take you no care, but ſurely guard your own. My honour I prefer before any thing, and it ſhall never be ſaid, that Piercy yielded to a Scot.

Whilſt they panſed a little, an arrow coming from amongſt the ranks of the Engliſh archers, pierced the valiant Douglas to the heart ; who falling to the ground, his laſt words were, Fight on my merry men all, revenge my death, for I

am ſlain, and Lord Piercy lives to ſee my fall.

Earl Piercy mourned Earl Douglas's death, as one glorious hero ever does another. But while he ſtood near the body, Sir Hugh Montgomery, a very valiant Scotch knight, let fly an arrow at him, which pierced his heart. Witherington perceiving this, and from whence the fatal ſhaft came, immediately vowed revenge, and therefore coming to Montgomery, with one ſtroke of a broad ſword ended his life. But himſelf did not long ſurvive; for ſhortly after a Scot with an arrow, put an end to this gallant hero's life.

THE Excellent OLD BALLAD.

DESCRIBING

The woeful Hunting Match on Cheviot Hills, with the bloody Fight between the Earls Piercy and Douglas.

GOD prosper long our noble King,
our lives and safeties all:
A woful hunting once there did
in *Chevy-Chace* befall.
To drive the Deer with hound and horn,
Earl *Piercey* took his way,
The child may rue that is unborn
the hunting of that day.
The stout Earl of *Northumberland*
a vow to God did make
His pleasures in the *Scottish* woods
three Summer Days to take;
The chiefest Harts in *Chevy-Chace*
to kill and bear away.
The tydings to Earl *Douglas* came
in Scotland, where he lay;

Who ſent Earl *Piercy* preſent word,
they would prevent his ſport.
The *Engliſh* Earl not fearing this,
did to the Woods reſort,
With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,
all choſen men of might,
Who knew full well, in time of need,
to aim their ſhafts aright.
The gallant greyhound ſwiftly run
to chaſe the fallow deer,
On *Monday* they began to hunt
when day light did appear
And long before high noon they had
an hundred fat bucks ſlain,
Then having dined the drovers went
to riſe them up again.
The bowmen muſtor'd on the hills.
well able to endure.
Their back ſides all with ſpecial care,
that day were guarded ſure.
The hounds ran ſwiftly thro' the woods
the nimble deer to take,
And with their cries the hills and dales
an echo ſhrill did make.
Lord *Piercy* to the quarry went,
to view the tender deer.
Quoth he Earl *Douglas* promiſed
this day to meet me here:
If that I thought he would not come,
no longer would I ſtay.
Then ſtept a brave young gentleman,
thus to the Earl did ſay:
Lo! yonder doth Earl *Douglas* come,
his men in armour bright;
Full twenty hundred *Scottiſh* ſpears,
all marching in our ſight:

All men of pleaſant *Tiviotdale*,
faſt by the river *Tweed*,
Then ceaſe your ſport, Earl *Piercy* ſaid
and take your bows with ſpeed:
And now with me, my countrymen,
your courage forth advance;
For never was there champion yet
in *Scotland* or in *France*,
That ever did on horſeback come
But if my hap it were,
I durſt encounter man for man
with him to break a ſpear,

Douglas on a milk white ſteed,
Much like a Baron bold,
Rode foremoſt of his company,
Whoſe armour ſhone like gold,
Shew me, ſaid he, whoſe men you be,
That hunt ſo boldly here;
That without my conſent dare chace
And kill the fallow deer.

The firſt that did the anſwer make
Was noble *Piercy* he,
Who ſaid, we liſt not to declare,
Or ſhew whoſe men we be;
Yet we will ſpend our deareſt blood,
The chiefeſt hearts to ſlay
Then *Douglas* ſwore a ſolemn oath
And thus in rage did ſay:
Before I will out-braved be,
One of us two ſhall die:
I know thee well, an Earl thou art,
Lord *Piercy*, ſo am I.
But truſt me *Piercy*, I think it were
A great offence to kill
Any of theſe our harmleſs men,
For they have done no ill;
Let thou and I the battle try,
And ſet our men aſide,
Accurſt be he, Lord *Piercy* ſaid,
By whom this is deny'd.
Then ſtept a gallant ſquire forth,
Witherington was his name,
Who ſaid, I would not have it told
To *Henry* our great King for ſhame,
That e'er my captain fought on foot,
And I ſtood looking on:
You are two Earls, ſaid *Witherington*,
And I a Squire alone;
I'll do the beſt, that do I may,
Whilſt I have power to ſtand;
Whilſt I have power to wield my ſword
I'll fight with heart and hand.
Our *Engliſh* archers bent their bows
Their hearts were good and true;
At the firſt flight of arrows ſent,
Full threeſcore Scots they flew.

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl *Douglas* had the bent.
The captains mov'd with muckle pride,
Their ſpears to ſhivers ſent.
They clos'd full faſt on every ſide,
No ſlackneſs there was found;
Whilſt many a gallant gentleman
Lay gaſping on the ground.
Oh, Chriſt! it was a grief to ſee,
And likewiſe for to hear,
The groans of men lying in their gore,
And ſcatter'd here and there.
At laſt theſe two great Earls did meet,
Like captains of great might,
Like lions mov'd, they laid on loads,
And made a bloody fight;
They fought until they both did ſweat,
With ſwords of temper'd ſteel,
Until the blood, like drops of rain,
They trickling down did feel.

Yield thee, Earl *Percy*, *Douglas*, ſaid,
In faith I will thee bring,
Where thou ſhalt high advanced be
By *James* our *Scottiſh* King:

Thy ranſom I will freely give,
And thus report of thee.
Thou art the moſt courageous knight,
That ever I did ſee.
To the Earl *Douglas*, *Piercy*, ſaid,
Thy proffers I do ſcorn;
I will not yield to any *Scot*,
That ever yet was born.
With that there came an arrow keen,
Out of an *Engliſh* bow,
Which ſtruck Earl *Douglas* to the heart,
A deep and deadly blow:
Who never ſpoke more words than theſe,
Fight on my merry men all;
For why, my life is at an end,
Lord *Piercy* ſees my fall.
Then leaving life, Earl *Piercy* took
The dead man by the hand,
And ſaid, Earl *Douglas*, for thy ſake
Would I had loſt my land:
O Chriſt! my very heart doth bleed
With ſorrow for thy ſake;
For ſure a more renowned knight
Miſchance did never take.
A knight among the *Scots* there was,
Who ſaw Earl *Douglas* die,
Who ſtrait in wrath did vow revenge
Upon the Lord *Piercy*:
Sir *Hugh Montgomery* was he call'd,
Who with a ſpear moſt bright,
Well mounted on a gallant ſteed,
Rode fiercely thro' the fight,
And paſs'd our *Engliſh* archers all,
Without all dread and fear;
And through Ear *Piercy*'s body then
He thruſt his hateful ſpear;

With ſuch a vehement force and might
He did his body gore,
That the ſpear went thro' the other ſide,
A full cloth yard and more:
So thus did both theſe nobles die
Whoſe courage none could ſtain:
An *Engliſh* archer then perceiv'd
The noble Earl was ſlain;
He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a truſty tree;
And an arrow of a cloth-yard long
Unto the head drew he;
Againſt Sir *Hugh Montgomery*
Aright his ſhaft he ſet;
The gray gooſe wing that was thereon
In his heart's blood was wet.
T'his fight did laſt from break of day,
Till ſetting of the ſun;
For when they rung the evening bell,
The battle ſcarce was done.
With the Earl *Piercy* there was ſlain;
Sir *John* of *Ogerton*,
Sir *Robert Ratcliff*, and Sir *John*,
Sir *James* that bold baron;
With good Sir *John* and good Sir *James*
both knights of good account,
Good Sir *Ralph Rabbin* there was ſlain;
whoſe proweſs did ſurmount
For *Witherington* needs muſt I wail,
as one in doleful dumps;
For when his legs were ſmitten off,
he fought upon his ſtumps.
And with Earl *Douglas* there were ſlain
Sir *Hugh Montgomery*,
Sir *Charles Carrel* that from the field
one foot would never flee

Sir *Charles Murrell* of *Ratcliff* too,
his ſiſter's ſon was he;
Sir *David Lamb*, ſo eſteem'd,
they ſaved could not be.
And the Lord *Maxwell* in likewiſe
did with Earl *Douglas* die.
Of twenty hundred *Scottiſh* ſpears,
ſcarce fifty five did fly.
Of fifteen hundred *Engliſhmen*
went home but fifty-three:
The reſt were ſlain in *Chivy Chace*,
under the green wood tree.
Next day did many widows come,
their husbands to bewail:
They waſh'd their wounds in briny tears:
yet all would not prevail.
Their bodies bath'd in purple gore,
with them they bore away,
And kiſs'd them dead a thouſand times
when they were clad in clay.
The news was brought to *Edinburgh*,
where *Scotland*'s King did reign,
That the Earl *Douglas* ſuddenly
was with an arrow ſlain.
Oh, heavy news! King *James* did ſay,
Scotland can witneſs be,
I have not any Captain more
of ſuch account as he.
Like tidings to King *Henry* came,
within a little ſpace,
That *Percy* of *Northumberland*
was ſlain in *Chevy-Chace*.
Then God be with him, ſaid our King,
ſith 'twill no better be;
truſt I have within my realm,
Five hundred good as he

Yet ſhall not *Scot* nor *Scotland* ſay,
but I will vengeance take,
And be revenged on them all
for my Lord *Percy's* ſake.
This vow full well the King performed,
after at Humble-Down,
Where fifty *Scotiſh* Earls were ſlain,
with men of great renown;
And of the reſt of ſmall account,
did many thouſands die,
Thus ended the hunting of *Cheuy-Chace*,
made by the Lord *Percy*.
God ſave the King, and bleſs the land,
in plenty, joy, and peace;
And grant henceforth, that foul debate,
'twixt noblemen may ceaſe.

FINIS.

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